

REMARKS

Claims 1-13 and 19-34 are currently pending in the application. By this amendment, claims 1-13 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Moreover, Applicant expressly reserves the right to recite the subject matter of the canceled claims in one or more continuation applications. No new matter has been entered.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the pending rejections are requested in view of the instant amendments and the accompanying remarks.

Interview with Examiner Darwin P. EREZO

Applicant wishes to thank Examiner EREZO for his courtesy and cooperation during the interview conducted on October 17, 2006.

During the above-noted interview, Applicants' representative discussed the features of the present invention and the advantages thereof with respect to the prior art. Moreover, Applicants' representative discussed the references cited by the Examiner and pointed out the shortcomings thereof with respect to the features of the present invention.

In particular, in discussing the Baker et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,979,450) reference cited and applied by the Examiner, Applicants' representatives discussed the structural aspects of the release liner 16 with the liner handle 22 of the surgical incise drape. See Figures 1A – 1E and Col. 8, lines 45-55 of Baker et al. The method limitations were also discussed in the Examiner interview.

Examiner EREZO responded positively to the above-noted remarks in connection with claims 19-34, indicating that the application would be in condition for allowance if Applicant canceled composition claims 1-13. Applicant also indicated their intention to file a Information Disclosure Statement.

Drawings

As neither the Examiner nor the Patent Office Draftsperson has objected to the originally submitted drawings, Applicant understands that these drawings are acceptable.

Amendment Fully Supported by the Original Disclosure

The above amendment does not add new matter to the application and is fully supported by the specification. For example, the subject matter of claim 19 was not amended, but merely the numbering of the steps was corrected.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and timely withdrawal of the pending objections and rejections for the reasons discussed below.

Amendment Proper for Entry

Applicant submits that the instant amendment does not raise any new issues for consideration by the Examiner or any questions of new matter. Further, Applicant submits that, as the instant amendment places the claims into condition for allowance, entry and consideration of this amendment is proper and, therefore, requested.

§103 Rejections are Believed to be Moot

Applicant submits that, in view of the instant Amendment, and in further view of the Examiner Interview dated October 17, 2006, the §103 rejections of claims 19-34 are believed to be moot.

In particular, Applicant notes that claims 1-13 have been canceled in accordance to the Examiner's remarks (in the above-mention Examiner Interview) to place the instant application in condition for allowance.


Accordingly, withdrawal of the §103 rejections is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, it is submitted that none of the references of record, either taken alone or in any proper combination thereof, anticipate or render obvious Applicant's invention, as recited in each of claims 19-34. The applied references of record have been discussed and distinguished, while significant claimed features of the present invention have been pointed out.

Accordingly, reconsideration of the outstanding Office Action and allowance of the present application and all the claims therein are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate.

Respectfully submitted,
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